

# *Sketch*

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*Volume 11, Number 2*

1945

*Article 4*

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## Silhouette

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# Silhouette

Linnea Jacobsen

## **Abstract**

So we walked in the door and there he was...

# Silhouette

Linnea Jacobsen

SO WE walked in the door and there he was. Christmas party and all. And there he was.

Now you take me—I'm the most liberal-minded person I know, and I was floored. I mean—after all, Mildred's always been a smart girl, and then to include him in the guests. But she always was one to be different; you know the type—anything for a scene!

I had my hand on Jim's arm, and I could feel him tighten up all over. I thought, frankly, he'd turn around and walk right out, but he didn't. Jim's sure a gentleman, all right. So we just stood and looked unconcerned.

Of course, Esther, like I said—it woulda been different if he'd been a mulatto—but a full-blooded—

Then I pretended I'd forgot my scarf in the car and asked Jim to come out with me. I said to him, "Now look here, James Tennant, all you've got to do is say how'd ya do. Tell them you're really too cold to shake hands—and just act like you would around anybody else. After all, if he has his Ph.D. in languages, he's had some education. And he can always teach in some negro school in the South." I told him just like I'm telling you. Why, I had a colored girl working for me once, and I thought the world of her. Not snippy a bit, like so many of the white ones are. She ate lunch with me every once in a while and everything. They can make a place for themselves. Look at Lena Horne; she's really kinda pretty.

I had a terrible time with Jim. After all—he said—they have their place. He said the next thing, they'd expect him to drive one of the damned niggers (that's what Jim said) around in his car.

We went back into the house and Mildred said hello and took our wraps. Didn't act a bit different. And we went into the living room. He was standing there by the piano (right by the rubber plant) and looked just as at home and natural—just like anybody else. Mildred came back with a trayful of Tom and Jerrys, and he took them from her and passed them around. I

looked at Jim, and we started to talk to Mattie—so when he came to us we just said thank you and went right on talking.

It was really all right. I heard him talking to Professor Dodds over in the corner. They were talking about some philosophy. Something about a cave story. Like I told Jim when we got home—he was just trying to show off, probably. Probably read it just for that night. Nobody I know reads Pluto—or was it—no, it was Pluto, all right.

Well, Esther, that's really all there was. He sat over by the Dodds, and we sat on the davenport near the radio. And everything really went off very well, I thought. Like I told Jim—you have them with you in the navy, right on the same boat with you for months and months—I guess we can be broad-minded about a problem like this, just as well as anybody else. After all, that's why we're fighting this war, *I* always say.



## The Drum

Owen SauerLender

**B**RIGHT stars in a satin sky half-hid, half-seen through the crowding trees beside the road. White limestone gravel, pale in the dark starlight, sharp and shifting under my hurrying feet. I follow the mountain road that twists carefully down the steep hillside, hear the hoarse whispers of the amorous tree toads, feel the throbbing pulse-beat of a distant native drum.

The drum seems nearer, and my feet move faster as the rhythm quickens, hurrying me along. Now the road is brighter, and the mountains rise on either side of a level clearing. The throbbing fills the air, beats in the dark bodies of the native boys swaying in a tight circle around the flaming torch and the beating drum.

Weird moving shadows and beams of light reach out from the dancing circle and are lost in the blackness about the clearing.

Someone drops out, and for a moment I see the intent body of the drummer bent above the drum steadily beating with both bare hands, see the white of his fixed eyes, gleaming in the flickering torch-light.

The throbbing stops, and for a long moment all is still. Someone laughs and the spell is broken.